**Why was the Berlin Wall Built?**

Background information:

* The Yalta conference took place during February 1945, where the new ‘big three’ (Roosevelt, Stalin, and Churchill) negotiated post-war terms.
* As partly linked to the cause of the construction of the Berlin Wall, it was agreed in Yalta for Berlin itself to be split into four zones. Western Berlin consisted of the western allies (French, British, American), where as the Soviets controlled the East.

In Western Berlin:

\*The United States wanted democracy.

\*Citizens had the freedom of speech, read what they wanted and criticism towards the government was not seen as crime.

\*They used telephone wires instead of radio.

In Eastern Berlin:

\*The Soviet Union rebuilt their Berlin sector as a socialist republic.

\*The government controlled all economic activity, including the media.

\*News was a teaching tool as it only reported what the government wanted the nation to think.

\*The only radio transmitter was taken over by the Soviets.

The Berlin wall is constructed:

\*By early 1961, an approximate number of 1000 eastern Berliners flee from the Soviet sector of Berlin, into a better life in the ‘Capitalist’ west.

\*Eastern Berliners watch their own neighbor leave to the west. The migration continues.

\*On 13th August 1961, the East Berlin government throws a 27-mile-long wall of barbed wire across the city. This split the western and eastern sectors of Berlin and citizens were no longer permitted to cross the boundary. The incident was not mentioned at first through the Eastern Berlin media, however when it was, the construction was said to be beneficial for the security of the Eastern Berliners. It ‘protected’ the citizens from ‘western capitalism’.

\*The Soviet government knew that the nation now preferred Western Capitalism than Eastern Communism.

\*Telephone lines and mail services between the western and eastern sectors of Berlin were cut.

\*Razor sharp wires were replaced by tons of stone, steel and deadly force across the following days. The Berlin wall was born!

Similar incident in the past: 1948 Berlin Blockade

\*The Western sector of Berlin was a capitalist island in the Soviet sea of Eastern Germany.

\*Stalin, in 1948, tried to starve West Berliners into submission. Similar to the Berlin Wall, Soviets never publicly admitted the true reason for action. In the Berlin Airlift, Stalin claimed that there were technical difficulties, and used this reason to defend his actions.